

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 06 SECTO 4091

STADIS//////////

NEA ONLY

FOR NEA (TWINAM) FROM SOBER

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SA, US
SUBJ: ACTION MEMO ON F-15S, SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS FOR
SAUDI ARABIA

1. FOLLOWING FULL TEXT OF DRAFT ACTION MEMO HAS BEEN CLEARED BY
ATHERTON. IT IS SOMEWHAT SIMPLIFIED FROM DRAFT IN
STATE 107747 AND WE BELIEVE THE CHANGES WILL BE ACCEPTABLE
TO PM. REVIEW FOR CONSISTENCY AND MAKE ANY NECESSARY
STYLISTIC CHANGES. SHOULD GO AS JOINT NEA/PM MEMO THROUGH
P AND T TO THE SECRETARY. PLEASE TRY TO HAVE MRS. BENSON
FOCUS ON THIS URGENTLY SO THAT IT CAN BE WAITING FOR
MR. HABIB ON HIS RETURN. OBVIOUSLY, VERY PROMPT MOVEMENT
IS NEEDED.

2. BEGIN TEXT:
ISSUE FOR DECISION
HOW TO DEAL IN DISCUSSION WITH CROWN PRINCE FAHD LATER
THIS MONTH, WITH THE SAUDI REQUEST FOR F-15 AIRCRAFT AND
ADDITIONAL SIDEWINDER AND MAVERICK MISSILES.

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I - ADVANCED FIGHTER AIRCRAFT
BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

IN 1974, SHORTLY AFTER A DOD SURVEY RECOMMENDED THAT
SAUDI ARABIA ACQUIRE AN ADVANCED FIGHTER AIRCRAFT TO
REPLACE THE BRITISH LIGHTNINGS, THE USG AGREED IN
PRINCIPLE TO PROVIDE SUCH AIRCRAFT IN THE 1979-80 PERIOD.
INITIALLY, WE TRIED TO INTEREST THE SAUDIS IN THE F-15,

ARGUING ITS EASIER MAINTENANCE BUT SAUDI PREFERENCE FOR THE F-14 OR F-15 SOON BECAME APPARENT. IN 1975 WE BRIEFED THE SAUDIS ON THE F-14, F-15 AND F-15 FIGHTERS AND A SAUDI AIR FORCE TEAM VISITED THE UNITED STATES IN APRIL 1976 TO ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL DATA ON THESE AIRCRAFT. IN OCTOBER 1976 THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE INFORMED THE SAUDIS THEY COULD PURCHASE WHICHEVER ADVANCED FIGHTER--INCLUDING THE F-15--THEY PREFERRED. IN FEBRUARY 1977, MINISTER OF DEFENSE PRINCE SULTAN WROTE AMBASSADOR PORTER REQUESTING DISCUSSIONS TOWARD PURCHASE OF F-15S. (THE SAUDIS INFORMALLY INDICATED THEY WANT TEN TWO-SEAT TRAINERS, AND FORTY OF THE NORMAL CONFIGURATION.) WE HAVE NOT YET REPLIED TO PRINCE SULTAN'S LETTER; PRINCE FAHD RAISED THE PURCHASE OF F-15S DURING YOUR RIYADH VISIT. ON THE BASIS OF THE FOREGOING HISTORY, THE SAUDIS UNDOUBTEDLY FEEL THEY IN EFFECT ALREADY HAVE A COMMITMENT TO THE F-15 AND ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO BEING ASSURED WE WILL PROVIDE IT. WE MUST ASSUME THAT CROWN PRINCE FAHD WILL RAISE THE ISSUE DURING HIS VISIT, POSSIBLY DIRECTLY WITH THE PRESIDENT. OUR PROBLEM IS HOW TO RECONCILE A RESPONSE TO SAUDIS CONCERNS FOR THEIR SECURITY, AS FOCUSED ON THIS ITEM, WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF OUR EVOLVING ARMS TRANSFER POLICY AND THE NEED TO TAKE CONGRESSIONAL OPINION INTO ACCOUNT. WE WOULD RUN A SERIOUS RISK OF AFFRONTING FAHD WITH A REJECTION OR A CLEARLY UNRESPONSIVE OR OBFUSCATING ANSWER AT THIS CRITICAL TIME IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS AND THE WORLD ENERGY SITUATION. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE ARE IMPORTANT REASONS--IN ARMS TRANSFER POLICY, REGIONAL SECRET

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(ARAB-ISRAEL) AND CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS--FOR HESITATING TO GIVE UNQUALIFIED APPROVAL TO THE SAUDI REQUEST AT THIS TIME. IN RECENT WEEKS, TOP SAUDI LEADERS HAVE TAKEN PAINS TO GIVE US SPECIFIC WARNINGS AGAINST TEMPORIZING ON ARMS SALES DECISIONS; THEY WANT TO BE ABLE TO MAKE TIMELY AND, IF NECESSARY, ALTERNATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THEIR MAJOR MILITARY PURCHASES.

NEA AND PM BELIEVE WE SHOULD TELL FAHD THAT WE WILL SEEK CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL FOR SALE OF AN ADVANCED AIRCRAFT IN FULFILLMENT OF THE COMMITMENT OF THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION. WE SHOULD BE CANDID WITH HIM ABOUT THE SERIOUS CONGRESSIONAL OPPOSITION ADVANCED AIRCRAFT MIGHT FACE. WE WOULD SEEK TO WORK OUT WITH THE SAUDIS THE TYPE OF AIRCRAFT, TIMING, AND QUANTITIES AS APPROPRIATE, IN A MANNER MEETING OUR POLICY AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL REQUIREMENTS. (H BELIEVES THE SOLUTION WOULD SEEM TO LIE IN REASSURING CROWN PRINCE FAHD THAT WE ARE ACTIVELY CONSIDERING THE PROPOSAL TO SUPPLY AN ADVANCED AIRCRAFT, WHILE SEEKING TO WORK OUT TYPE, TIMING, AND QUANTITIES

AS APPROPRIATE, IN A MANNER MEETING OUR POLICY AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL REQUIREMENTS.)

IN THE CASE OF AN ADVANCED AIRCRAFT, WE BELIEVE THE SAUDIS WOULD ACCEPT A 1982 OR 1983 DATE FOR THE DELIVERY OF THE FIRST AIRCRAFT, EVEN THOUGH OUR ORIGINAL COMMITMENT WAS TO 1979-80. DOD INFORMS US THE LATER DATES ARE PROFESSIONALLY DEFENSIBLE FROM THE STANDPOINT OF LIMITED SAUDI ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY. THIS COULD PERMIT PUTTING OFF SUBMITTING A LETTER OF OFFER WHILE CAREFULLY REVIEWING NUMBERS, BOTH OF REQUIRED AIRCRAFT AND ASSOCIATED MUNITIONS AND SAUDI ABILITY TO ABSORB THEM.

THERE REMAINS THE IMPORTANT QUESTION OF WHETHER OUR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE SHOULD BE TO THE F-15 OR MERELY TO AN ADVANCED FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, THE OTHERS IN THIS CATEGORY BEING THE F-14, F-16 AND THE F-18. PM AND DOD MAINTAIN THAT BECAUSE OF THE INCORPORATION OF THE HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED PHOENIX MISSILE INTO THE F-14 AND
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THE SUBSTANTIAL DOUBT THE F-18L WILL ACTUALLY BE PRODUCED,

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STADIS////////////////////////////////////

NEA ONLY

FOR NEA (TWINAM) FROM SOBER

THE F-16 IS THE ONLY PURSUABLE ALTERNATIVE.
THE SAUDIS HAVE EVIDENCED A STRONG, SERIOUS PREFERENCE

FOR THE F-15 FROM THE OUTSET BECAUSE, UNLIKE THE F-16, IT HAS AN ALL-WEATHER CAPABILITY, TWO ENGINES AND AN ABILITY TO FIRE RADAR-CONTROLLED AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES. THEY HAVE ALREADY DONE CAREFUL STAFF WORK ON ACQUISITION OF THE F-15 PURSUANT TO WHAT THEY UNDERSTOOD TO BE A U.S. COMMITMENT ON THIS AIRCRAFT IF THEY CHOSE IT. THEY ARE LIKELY TO REMAIN ADAMANT IN THEIR DESIRE FOR THE F-15.

ON THE OTHER HAND, WE MUST CONSIDER THAT A SIMPLER, LIGHTWEIGHT AIRCRAFT MAY BE A MORE APPROPRIATE WEAPON IN VIEW OF SAUDI ABSORPTIVE LIMITATIONS. POLITICALLY, THE LESSER SOPHISTICATION OF THE LIGHTWEIGHT FIGHTER AND THE FACT THAT IT IS PERCEIVED TO BE MORE DEFENSIVELY ORIENTED MAY MAKE ITS SALE MORE PALATABLE DOMESTICALLY AND, IN THE AREA, TO ISRAEL.

CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

OBVIOUSLY WE WILL WANT TO CONSULT CLOSELY WITH THE CONGRESS BEFORE MAKING ANY FINAL COMMITMENT TO THE SAUDIS ON EITHER AIRCRAFT OR ADDITIONAL MISSILES. SECURING CONGRESSIONAL AGREEMENT WILL NOT
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BE EASY IN ANY EVENT, BUT WE WILL GAIN MUCH GREATER UNDERSTANDING, IF NOT AGREEMENT, OF THE VERY HARD CHOICE THAT CONFRONTS THE ADMINISTRATION IN THIS CASE, IF WE CANDIDLY LAY OUT OUR PROBLEMS WITH THE SALE AND EXPLAIN WHY WE REACHED OUR DECISION..

H BELIEVES ANY MOVE INTO AN ADVANCED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM FOR SAUDI ARABIA WILL REQUIRE THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE CONSULTATION WITH THE CONGRESS. NOW IS A VERY DIFFICULT TIME TO MAKE THAT CONSULTATION. BUT IT MAY WELL BE THAT AT SOME APPROPRIATE TIME, WHEN WE CAN EXPLAIN THE PROPOSAL IN TERMS OF AN OVERALL ARMS RESTRAINT POLICY AND IN TERMS OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE-MAKING PROCESS, WE WILL BE ABLE TO SEEK CONGRESSIONAL CONCURRENCE IN SUCH A SALE. AT PRESENT, HOWEVER, WITH THE ARMS CONTROL POLICY STILL IN A STATE OF FLUX AND WITH NO COMPELLING NEED ON THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE SCENE, H BELIEVES WE DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH AMMUNITION TO PERSUADE CONGRESS OF THE WISDOM OF THIS SALE. FURTHERMORE, THIS MONTH IS FILLED WITH CONGRESSIONAL EXCITEMENT AND AGITATION OVER MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS. IT IS STIMULATED BY OUR DECISION TO MOVE ON THE I-HAWK SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA, THE ISSUES OF COPRODUCTION AND HIGH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER TO ISRAEL IN THE PRM 12 CONTEXT, THE NUCLEAR POLICY STATEMENT WHICH SOME BELIEVE IS HOSTILE TO ISRAEL, AND RECENT MEMORIES OF OTHER DECISIONS WHICH ISRAEL'S FRIENDS IN CONGRESS VIEW AS HOSTILE TO ISRAEL'S BEST INTEREST, SUCH AS THE KFIR AND CBU REJECTIONS.

IN SHORT, H BELIEVES WE MUST BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT SOME COST IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH SAUDI ARABIA TO AVOID A GREATER COST TO OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH SAUDI ARABIA AS A RESULT OF CONGRESSIONAL REACTION. H STRONGLY PREFERS AN EFFORT BE MADE TO EXPLAIN THIS TO FAHD WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ALL THE OTHER STEPS BEING

TAKEN IN TERMS OF THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE SETTLEMENT, THE AGREEMENT TO MOVE THE I-HAWKS AND PREVIOUS ACTION TO MOVE MAVERICKS AND SIDEWINDER MISSILES.

H CONCLUDES THAT FAILURE TO CONSULT IF ANY COMMITMENT IS MADE TO FAHD WILL RESULT IN THE MOST SERIOUS CONSEQUENCE OF ALL. LEAKS ARE VIRTUALLY INEVITABLE, AND WOULD RESULT IN SERIOUS DAMAGE TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S CREDIBILITY.

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THIS CREDIBILITY WILL BE REQUIRED TO SELL CONGRESS A MID-EAST PEACE PACKAGE AND/OR ARMS RESTRAINT IN THE MID EAST.

IN BROADER MIDDLE EAST CONTEXT, H BELIEVES WE SHOULD CLEAR BOTH THE I-HAWK AND THE EGYPTIAN ITEMS THROUGH CONGRESS BEFORE BRINGING THIS SENSITIVE ISSUE TO THE HILL.

NEA AND PM BELIEVE IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS BEFORE THE FAHD VISIT IF WE INTEND TO COMMIT OURSELVES TO NEW SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA. HOWEVER, THEY BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD NOT BE ESSENTIAL TO CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS BEFOREHAND IF WE INTEND TO LIMIT OURSELVES TO TELLING FAHD THAT WE WILL SEEK CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL FOR SALES IN FULFILLMENT OF COMMITMENTS OF THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION.

THE OPTIONS

ANY COMMITMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE QUALIFIED BY THE NEED TO CONSULT WITH AND GAIN THE ACQUIESCENCE OF THE CONGRESS. ON THE OTHER HAND, EVEN IF WE NOW DETERMINE NOT TO SELL ADVANCED AIRCRAFT, WE PRESUMABLY WOULD NOT WISH TO STRAIN THE RELATIONSHIP BY TELLING FAHD DURING HIS VISIT HERE THAT WE HAVE MADE A FINAL NEGATIVE DECISION.

THIS LEAVES US WITH THREE OPTIONS:

1. INFORM FAHD THAT WE ARE ACTIVELY CONSIDERING THE F-15 IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR LONG-STANDING SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP, BUT NEED TO REVIEW THIS SALE IN LIGHT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S ARMS TRANSFER POLICY AND CONSULT WITH CONGRESS ABOUT THE SALE IN THAT CONTEXT. THIS IS A SIMPLE EXTENSION OF WHAT THE SECRETARY TOLD FAHD LAST TIME THEY MET. WE MIGHT PROMISE A FINAL DECISION BEFORE, PERHAPS THE END OF THE YEAR (THE

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STADIS//////////

NEA ONLY

FOR NEA (TWINAM) FROM SOBER

DATE COULD BE NEGOTIABLE WITH THE SAUDIS).

PROS

-- WOULD ALLOW US TIME FURTHER TO ANALYZE THE
APPROPRIATENESS OF THE SALE.

-- WOULD DEFER ADVERSE CONGRESSIONAL REACTION.

CONS

-- WOULD SERIOUSLY DISTURB THE SAUDIS AT A TIME
WHEN WE WANT THEIR MAXIMUM COOPERATION.

-- IF OUR SUBSEQUENT ANSWER IS NEGATIVE, OR EVEN
RESTRICTIVE, THE SAUDIS MAY BE BITTER THAT WE
DID NOT COMMUNICATE IT EARLIER

-- SAUDIS WOULD PROBABLY BE DISINCLINED TO DISCUSS
ANY OTHER ARMS PURCHASE LIMITATIONS UNTIL WE
HAD GIVEN OUR DECISION ON THIS KEY ITEM.

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WM AGREE, IN PRINCIPLE, SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENT
TO CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS, TO SUPPLY THE F-15,
POINTING OUT THAT WE MUST CAREFULLY DISCUSS DELIVERY DATES
IN THE 1980S IN TERMS OF SAUDI ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY.

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-- WOULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARD MEETING ESSENTIAL
SAUDI CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONSTANCY OF OUR ARMS
SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP.

-- WOULD MAKE THE SAUDIS MORE RECEPTIVE TO ANY
SUBSEQUENT ARMS SALES LIMITATIONS PROPOSALS
WE MIGHT MAKE.

CONS

-- THE CONGRESS MIGHT WELL REJECT THIS SALE UNDER
36B.

-- THERE HAS NOT BEEN ADEQUATE ANALYSIS BY THIS
ADMINISTRATION TO JUSTIFY, ON MILITARY GROUNDS, THE
SALE OF OUR MOST SOPHISTICATE AIRCRAFT AT THIS TIME.

-- THE CREDIBILITY OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY
ON ARMS TRANSFERS WOULD BE TO SOME EXTENT UNDERMINED.

-- HUNDREDS OF AMERICAN TECHNICIANS WOULD BE REQUIRED
TO SUPPORT THESE AIRCRAFT FOR MANY YEARS INTO THE
FUTURE.

-- THE SAUDIS WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY IN FULLY
EMPLOYING THE AIRCRAFT FOR MANY YEARS TO COME
(AND MAY BLAME THE USG FOR THEIR OWN SHORTCOMINGS
IN THIS REGARD).

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AA THE ISRAELIS WOULD REACT STRONGLY TO ANY AGREEMENT;
THEY MAY TRY TO USE A SALE OF ADVANCED AIRCRAFT
AS A LEVER TO PRY FURTHER CONCESSIONS FROM US.
THE ISRAELI REACTION MIGHT CONCEIVABLY COMPLICATE
THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE NEGOTIATING PROCESS.

3. TELL FAHD THAT WE WILL SEEK CONGRESSIONAL
APPROVAL TO SELL THE SAUDIS AN ADVANCED AIRCRAFT,
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMITMENT OF THE PREVIOUS
ADMINISTRATION, WITHOUT COMMITTING OURSELVES TO A SPECIFIC
TYPE OR QUANTITY, OR TO A SPECIFIC DELIVERY DATE OR
TO ANY SPECIFIC TYPE OR QUANTITIES OF ASSOCIATED MUNITIONS.
WE WOULD ALSO POINT OUT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S NEED
TO REVIEW SPECIFICS AND CONSULT WITH CONGRESS WILL REQUIRE
SOME TIME, BUT WE WILL MOVE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

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-- WOULD GIVE THE SAUDIS REASONABLE ASSURANCE THAT

THE USG INTENDS TO SUPPORT THEM AND THEIR BASIC SECURITY NEEDS.

-- GIVES THE ADMINISTRATION TIME TO THOROUGHLY ANALYZE THE APPROPRIATE TYPE, NUMBER AND DELIVERY DATE FOR AIRCRAFT (AND ASSOCIATED MUNITIONS).

-- WOULD ALLOW FULLER CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATIONS.

-- WOULD ALLOW US TO MAKE OUR FINAL DECISION MORE IN KEEPING WITH PRM 12.

AA THIS OPTION ALLOWS US TO BE AS RESPONSIVE AS POSSIBLE TO FAHD, WITHOUT, IN NEA AND PM'S VIEW, THE NECESSITY OF CONSULTING CONGRESS BEFORE SECRET

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HIS VISIT.

CONS

-- H BELIEVES CONGRESS WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSULTED IN ADVANCE OF SUCH A COMMITMENT. THIS WOULD ALSO MEAN A VERY HIGH RISK OF VIOLENT AND PREEMPTIVE NEGATIVE REACTION, SUCH AS A LETTER SIGNED BY A MAJORITY OF THE SENATE, EFFECTIVELY FORECLOSING THE OPTION OF EVERY SELLING THE F-15 TO SAUDI ARABIA BECAUSE OF THE 36B REQUIREMENT FOR CONGRESSIONAL ACCEPTANCE. H BELIEVES THE TIMING NOW IS ESPECIALLY BAD BECAUSE OF THE ANTAGONISM OF MANY OF ISRAEL'S FRIENDS TO OTHER MIDDLE EAST RELATED POLICIES OF THIS ADMINISTRATION.

-- H ALSO QUESTIONS WHETHER THE ADMINISTRATION WISHES TO MAKE THE APPEARANCE OF YIELDING SO MUCH DISCRETION IN THIS MATTER TO THE CONGRESS.

-- THERE HAS NOT BEEN ADEQUATE ANALYSIS BY THIS ADMINISTRATION TO JUSTIFY, ON MILITARY GROUNDS,

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STADIS////////////////////////////////

NEA ONLY

FOR NEA (TWINAM) FROM SOBER

THE SALE OF SOPHISTICATED AIRCRAFT AT THIS TIME.

-- THE CREDIBILITY OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY
ON ARMS TRANSFERS WOULD BE TO SOME EXTENT UNDER-
MINED.

-- HUNDREDS OF AMERICAN TECHNICIANS WOULD BE REQUIRED
TO SUPPORT THESE AIRCRAFT FOR MANY YEARS INTO THE
FUTURE

-- THE SAUDIS WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY IN FULLY
EMPLOYING THE AIRCRAFT FOR MANY YEARS TO COME
(AND MAY BLAME THE USG FOR THEIR OWN SHORTCOMINGS
IN THIS REGARD).

II - SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

AS PART OF THE MODERNIZATION OF THEIR ARMED FORCES,
SINCE 1971 THE SAUDIS HAVE PURCHASED 114 F-5 AIRCRAFT;
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ALL WILL BE DELIVERED BY 1978. ASSOCIATED SIDEWINDER AIR-
59-AIR AND MAVERICK AIR-TO-GROUND MISSILES ARE BEING
PURCHASED SEPARATELY. REALIZING THE UNITED STATES WOULD
PROBABLY BE UNABLE TO PROVIDE THEM WITH PROMPT RESUPPLY
FROM STOCKS IN THE CASE OF A CRISIS, THE SAUDIS HAVE SOUGHT
A WAR RESERVE AND TRAINING STOCK OF THIS ARMAMENT. TO
HELP DETERMINE HOW MANY SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS SHOULD
BE ACQUIRED OVER THE NEXT DECADE, THE U.S. AIR FORCE CON-
\$7:53\$ 8, 1975 A STUDY BASED ON THE SAUDI FORCE STRUCTURE,

NORMAL RESERVE REQUIREMENTS FOR 60 DAYS, AND A SCENARIO OF A SIMULTANEOUS ATTACK BY SOUTH YEMEN AND IRAQ USING THE METHODOLOGY BY WHICH OUR OWN FORCES ESTABLISH WAR RESERVE REQUIREMENTS.

THE SAUDIS ACCEPTED THE USAF RECOMMENDATION OF 2,000 SIDEWINDERS AND 2,500 MAVERICKS, DROPPING THEIR ORIGINAL LARGER REQUESTS. AN LOA FOR 1,000 MAVERICKS WAS SIGNED IN THE SPRING OF 1976.

IN THE SUMMER ON 1976, TO ACCOMMODATE VIGOROUS CONGRESSIONAL OPPOSITION ADMINISTRATION AGREED TO SCALE DOWN A REQUEST FOR THE 2,000 SIDEWINDERS AND THE OUTSTANDING 1,500 MAVERICKS TO 850 AND 650 RESPECTIVELY. IN INFORMING THE SAUDIS OF OUR DECISION, PRESIDENT FORD WROTE KING KHALID THAT EVERY EFFORT WOULD BE MADE TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL QUANTITIES OF SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS IN THE FUTURE. FURTHER, THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION MADE CLEAR TO THE CONGRESS THAT ITS DECISION DID NOT RULE OUT PROPOSING ADDITIONAL SALES IN THE FUTURE. IN DECEMBER 1976, THE SAUDI VICE CHIEF OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, PRINCE TURKI, IN A LETTER TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, REQUESTED THE BALANCE OF THE SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS. WE REPLIED THAT THE MATTER WAS UNDER REVIEW (N.B.: PRESIDENT FORD'S ASSURANCES TO KING KHALID WERE FOR "ADDITIONAL" MISSILES, WITH NO COMMITMENT REGARDING SPECIFIC AMOUNTS.) OUR SURVEY AND LAST YEAR'S COMPROMISE WITH THE CONGRESS HAVE TWICE

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REDUCED THE NUMBER THE SAUDIS ORIGINALLY REQUESTED. IT WILL, THEREFORE, BE DIFFICULT TO GET THE SAUDIS TO AGREE TO ADDITIONAL CUTS.

NEA BELIEVES THAT SINCE THE NUMBERS THE SAUDIS SEEK REPRESENT A 60-DAY WAR RESERVE INVENTORY, IF WE CAN GIVE THEM POSITIVE AND PRACTICAL REASSURANCES ABOUT OUR OVERALL ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP, THEY MAY BE WILLING TO REDUCE THEIR WAR RESERVES AND HENCE SCALE DOWN THE NUMBER OF SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS THEY SEEK. WE COULD ALSO, NEA BELIEVES, ARGUE THAT THE HIGHER STOCK LEVELS PROFESSIONALLY JUSTIFIABLE WOULD NOT BE WORTH THE STRAIN ON THE OVERALL RELATIONSHIP THAT DOMESTIC CONTROVERSY AT THIS TIME OVER OUR EFFORT TO MEET THEM MIGHT IMPOSE. WE RECOGNIZE THAT CONGRESSIONAL SENSITIVITY WILL PROBABLY DICTATE THAT WE HOLD OFF ON ANY FUTURE SALES ACTIONS FOR AT LEAST SOME MONTHS.

PM BELIEVES THAT THERE IS NO NEW MILITARY JUSTIFICATION BEYOND THAT ADVANCED LAST FALL. AT THAT TIME, IT WAS FAR FROM CLEAR, WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH THAT THE SALE OF

2,000 SIDEWINDERS AND 2,500 MAVERICKS WAS MILITARILY JUSTIFIED. THERE WAS, FOR EXAMPLE, DOUBT THAT THE AIR FORCE ANALYSIS ON THE NUMBER OF SIDEWINDERS NEEDED FOR THE SAUDI F-5S, WHICH CAN CARRY ONLY TWO SIDEWINDERS AT A TIME, WAS REALISTIC. SIMILARLY THERE WERE SUSPICIONS THAT THE RECOMMENDATION FOR SALE OF 2500 MAVERICKS WAS AT LEAST PARTIALLY MOTIVATED BY AN AIR FORCE DESIRE TO SELL THEIR STOCKS OF THE "A" MODEL AND REPLACE THEM WITH THE NEWER "B" MODEL MAVERICKS.

PM DOES NOT BELIEVE, THEREFORE, THAT WE SHOULD TAKE A DECISION ON SELLING ADDITIONAL MISSILES UNTIL WE HAVE COMPLETED THE STUDY OF SAUDI MILITARY CAPABILITIES WHICH IS NOW UNDER WAY. AFTER THE STUDY IS COMPLETED, WE HOPE IN ABOUT 40 DAYS, WE WILL BE IN A POSITION TO RE-EXAMINE
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THIS REQUEST, AS WELL AS ANY OTHERS, AND CAN PUT OUR OVERALL MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP ON A FIRMER BASIS, BOTH IN TERMS OF HOW WE EVALUATE SAUDI REQUESTS AND OUR PRESENTATIONS TO CONGRESS.

WHATEVER THE MERITS OF THE CASE FOR ADDITIONAL MISSILES, TO AGREE TO PROVIDE MORE WOULD SERIOUSLY STRAIN THE ADMINISTRATION'S CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS AND ITS CREDIBILITY ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT.

PM BELIEVES THAT WE SHOULD ASK FAHD'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE NATURE OF THESE MISSILE CASES. WE SHOULD TELL HIM FRANKLY THAT, RIGHT OR WRONG, IT WILL PROBABLY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO PRESENT A LETTER OF OFFER FOR

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STADIS////////////////////////////////////

NEA ONLY

FOR NEA (TWINAM) FROM SOBER

AT LEAST ANOTHER YEAR. PM WOULD SUPPORT, HOWEVER, IN A MORE POSITIVE VEIN, AN AGREEMENT TO REPLACE ANY MISSILES THAT THE SAUDIS EXPEND FOR TRAINING ON A ONE-FOR-ONE BASIS AND, THEREFORE, CURRENT STOCKS, IF WE CAN VERIFY THESE, CAN BE MAINTAINED.

THE OPTIONS

WE BELIEVE THAT IN THE CASE OF THE SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS, JUST AS IN THE CASE OF THE ADVANCED FIGHTER, REALISTIC OPTIONS PROBABLY DO NOT INCLUDE EITHER COMPLETELY REFUSING OR COMPLETELY ACCEPTING THE SAUDI REQUEST. THE TWO CASES ARE DIFFERENT, HOWEVER, IN THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY DEMONSTRATED ITS WILLINGNESS TO SUPPLY SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS AND THE SAUDIS ARE ALREADY WELL AWARE OF THE CONTROVERSY THESE SALES HAVE AROUSED IN THE CONGRESS. H BELIEVES IN TIME THE CONGRESSIONAL VIEW OF THESE SALES IS LIKELY TO BE LESS VOLATILE THAN ITS REACTION TO ADVANCED AIRCRAFT. WHILE THE MEMORY IS STILL FRESH OF LAST FALL'S BITTER BATTLE ON THESE MISSILES, HOWEVER, THEIR SALE IS LIKELY TO BE EFFECTIVELY OPPOSED. WE SEE THREE OPTIONS:

1. INFORM FAHD THAT WE CAN MADE NO DECISON
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REGARDING THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS UNTIL WE HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THEM IN LIGHT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S ARMS TRANSFER POLICY, AND AFTER WE HAVE HAD ADEQUATE TIME TO TEST FURTHER CONGRESSIONAL REACTIONS TO THE SALE.

PROS

-- WOULD ALLOW US TIME FURTHER TO ANALYZE THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE SALE.

-- WOULD DEFER ADVERSE CONGRESSIONAL REACTION.

CONS

-- WOULD SERIOUSLY DISTURB THE SAUDIS AT A TIME WHEN WE WANT THEIR MAXIMUM COOPERATION.

2. INFORM FAHD THAT WE WILL MAITAIN SAUDI STOCKS

AT THE LEVEL ANTICIPATED BY CURRENTLY APPROVED SALES BY REPLACING ANY THAT THE SAUDIS EXPEND FOR TRAINING ON A ONE-FOR-ONE BASIS, BUT CANNOT NOW AGREE TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL MISSILES. (PM AND H SUPPORT THIS OPTION.)

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-- IF WE HAVE APPROVED THE ADVANCED AIRCRAFT, PLUS THE RECENT APPROVAL OF THE I-HAWK, C-130S AND OTHER CASES, WE CAN CREDIBLY ARGUE THAT WE HAVE REAFFIRMED OUR SUPPORT FOR SAUDI ARABIA. WE WOULD SEEK FAHD'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE REAL PROBLEMS THESE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE CASES POSE FOR US.

-- WILL REAFFIRM OUR SERIOUS APPROACH TO RESTRAINT ON ARMS TRANSFERS.

-- WILL AVOID A SERIOUS STRAIN IN THE ADMINISTRATION'S CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS.
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CONS

-- WOULD SHAKE THE SAUDI'S FAITH IN THE CONSTANCY OF OUR MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP.
-- WOULD UNDERMINE SAUDI CONFIDENCE IN THE USEFULNESS OF OUR MILITARY ADVICE.

3. CONFIRMS TO FAHD THE COMMITMENT OF THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION, SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENT TO CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS, TO SUPPLY ADDITIONAL SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS -- THE NUMBER TO BE DETERMINED. NO LETTERS OF OFFER WOULD BE SIGNED FOR SOME MONTHS, PROBABLY NOT BEFORE NEXT YEAR. (NEA SUPPORTS THIS OPTION.)

PROS

-- WOULD HELP MEET SAUDI CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONSTANCY OF OUR ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP BY DEMONSTRATING THE ADMINISTRATION'S DETERMINATION TO HONOR FORMER COMMITMENTS WITHIN THE LIMITS OF CURRENT EVOLVING POLICIES AND CONGRESSIONAL SENTIMENTS.
-- WOULD MAKE THE SAUDIS MORE RECEPTIVE TO ANY SUBSEQUENT ARMS SALES LIMITATIONS PROPOSALS WE MIGHT MAKE.

CONS:

-- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS TO DECIDE IF IT WOULD FULLY SATISFY OUR ARMS SALES LIMITATION REQUIREMENTS.
-- RUNS SERIOUS RISK OF BEING REJECTED BY THE CONGRESS WHEN LOAS PRESENTED.

-- AS WITH THE ADVANCED AIRCRAFT, AGREEMENT WITHOUT
CONSULTATIONS WOULD BE A MISTAKE, AND CONSULTATIONS
NOW COULD LEAD TO PREEMPTIVE ACTION AGAINST FURTHER
SALES.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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A. ADVANCED AIRCRAFT.

TELL FAHD THAT WE WILL SEEK CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL
TO SELL THE SAUDIS AN ADVANCED AIRCRAFT, IN FULFILLMENT
OF THE COMMITMENT OF THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION, WITHOUT
COMMITTING OURSELVES TO A SPECIFIC TYPE OR QUANTITY, OR
TO A SPECIFIC DELIVERY DATE OR TO ANY SPECIFIC TYPE OR

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 CCO-00 ONY-00 /026 W

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STADIS//////////

NEA ONLY

FOR NEA (TWINAM) FROM SOBER

QUANTITIES OF ASSOCIATED MUNITIONS. WE WOULD ALSO POINT
OUT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S NEED TO REVIEW SPECIFICS AND
CONSULT WITH CONGRESS WILL REQUIRE SOME TIME, BUT WE WILL
MOVE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. (NEA AND PM SUPPORT THIS
OPTION.)

-)534,-58;3)6, AGREE SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENT TO
CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS, TO SUPPLY THE F-15 POINTING OUT
THAT WE MUST CAREFULLY DISCUSS DELIVERY DATES IN THE 1980S

IN TERMS OF SAUDI ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY.

ALTERNATIVELY, INFORM FAHD THAT WE ARE ACTIVELY CONSIDERING THE F-15 IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR LONG-STANDING SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP, BUT NEED TO REVIEW THIS SALE IN LIGHT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S ARMS TRANSFER POLICY AND CONSULT WITH CONGRESS ABOUT THE SALE IN THAT CONTEXT. THIS IS A SIMPLE EXTENSION OF WHAT THE SECRETARY TOLD FAHD LAST TIME THEY MET. WE MIGHT PROMISE A FINAL DECISION BEFORE, PERHAPS THE END OF THE YEAR (THE DATE WOULD BE NEGOTIABLE WITH THE SAUDIS). IN THIS CASE NO CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS ARE NECESSARY. (H SUPPORTS THIS ALTERNATIVE.)

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B. CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION

H FEELS THAT SELECTING THE FIRST OPTION ABOVE WOULD REQUIRE CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO THE FAHD VISIT. PM AND NEA FEEL THA THE OPTION THEY SUPPORT AVOIDS THE NEED TO CONSULT PRIOR TO FAHD'S VISIT.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT YOU DECIDE THAT PRIOR TO THE VISIT WE:

- A. CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS.
- B. NOT CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS.

C. MAVERICKS AND SIDEWINDERS

CONFIRM TO FAHD THE COMMITMENT OF THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION, SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENT TO CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS, TO SUPPLY ADDITIONAL SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS--THE NUMBER TO BE DETERMINED. NO LETTERS OF OFFER WOULD BE SIGNED FOR SOME MONTHS, PROBABLY NOT BEFORE NEXT YEAR. (NEA SUPPORTS THIS RECOMMENDATION.)

ALTERNATIVELY, INFORM FAHD THAT WE WILL MAINTAIN SAUDI STOCKS AT THE LEVEL ANTICIPATED BY CURRENTLY APPROVED SALES, BY REPLACING ANY THAT THE SAUDIS EXPEND FOR TRAINING ON A ONE-FOR-ONE BASIS, BUT MUST DEFER A DECISION ON PROVIDING ADDITIONAL MISSILES UNTIL OUR ARMS TRANSFER POLICY IS FIRMLY SET AND WE HAVE CONSULTED FURTHER WITH CONGRESS. (PM AND H SUPPORT THIS OPTION.)

ALTERNATIVELY, INFORM FAHD THAT WE CAN MAKE NO DECISION REGARDING THE PROVISION OF SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS UNTIL WE HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THEM IN LIGHT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S ARMS TRANSFER POLICY, AND AFTER WE HAVE HAD ADEQUATE TIME TO TEST FURTHER CONGRESSIONAL REACTIONS TO THE SALE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Sent Date: 14-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Status: NATIVE
Subject: ACTION MEMO ON F-15S, SIDEWINDERS AND MAVERICKS FOR SAUDI ARABIA
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, SA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
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